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EXCAVATIONS AT TELL EN-NASBEH

1926 and 1927

A PRELIMINARY REPORT

BY

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Director of the Palestine Institute and
Professor on the Frederic Billings Foundation
for Old Testament Literature and
Semitic Languages
Pacific School of Religion

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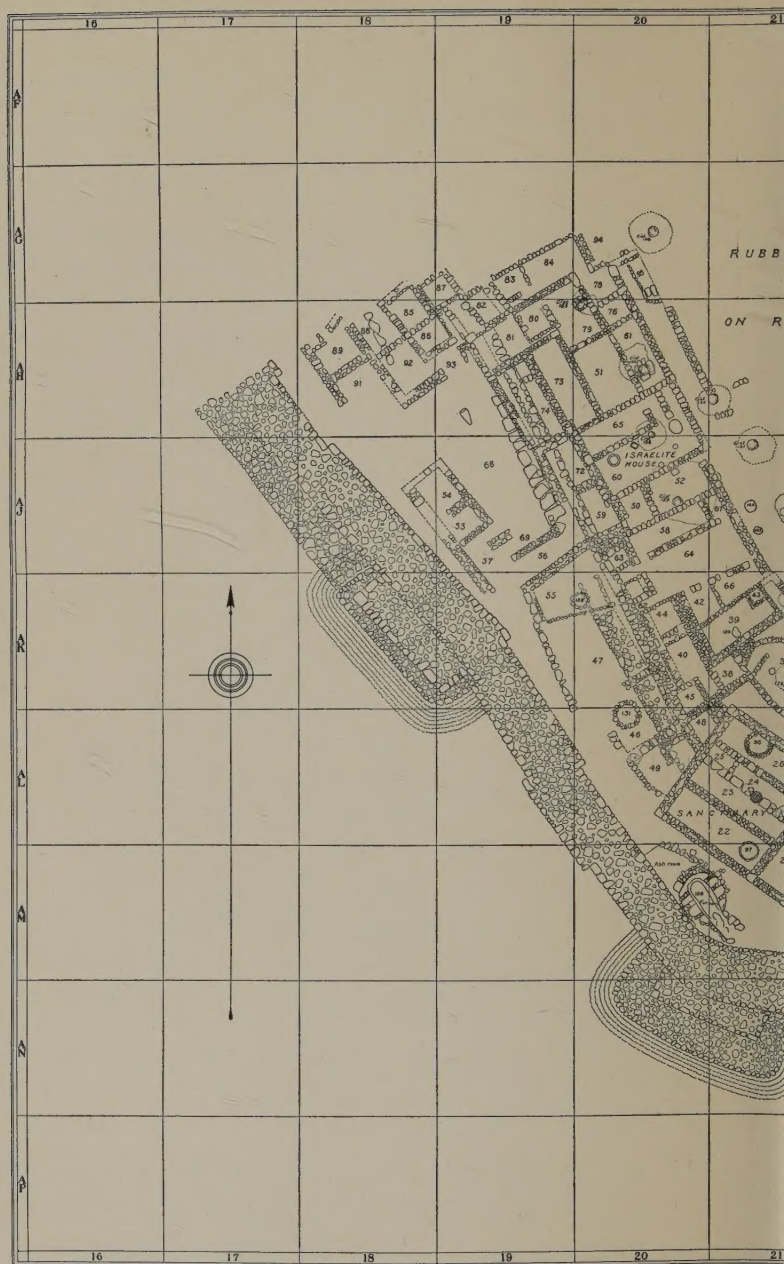
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SITE OF EXCAVATIONS

The Pacific School of Religion is actively conducting excavations in Palestine at Tell en-Nasbeh, seven miles north of Jerusalem, near Ramallah, which is the postoffice address.

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I. All structures are numbered in a continuing series. Cisterns
metres square, and each is identified



tinguished by a C in front of the number. The quadrangles are ten
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II. Pal. Inst. Photo. No. A5. Tell en-Nasbeh seen from S. E.
Maloufia and Nablus road in right hand foreground.

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THE TELL EN-NASBEH EXPEDITION
of the
PACIFIC SCHOOL OF RELIGION

Preliminary Report for 1926 and 1927

By William Frederic Badè, Director

Introductory

The circumstances under which the Tell en-Nasbeh Expedition of the Pacific School of Religion was organized in 1925 have been set forth by me elsewhere* and need not be repeated here. It was an enterprise in which I was able to interest a number of my personal friends who generously provided the necessary means. During the first campaign, in the spring of 1926, I was on sabbatical leave. The following year our Board of Trustees granted me special leave of absence to continue the excavations. The results of these two seasons of work are so surprising, and so important archaeologically, that we deem it desirable to issue this brief preliminary report in advance of the 1929 campaign.

Tell en-Nasbeh was one of several sites to which my attention was called by Dr. William F. Albright, Director of the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem. In the choice of this particular site I was influenced by the fact that a number of scholars, among them Gustav Dalman, W. J. Phythian-Adams, and Père H. Vincent, had argued for its

*"Excavating a Buried City." Opening address, Pacific School of Religion, August 16, 1926.

"Mizpah Expedition of the Pacific School of Religion." *Pacific School of Religion Bulletin*, Vol. V, No. 3, September, 1926.

"Excavation of Tell en-Nasbeh." *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*, No. 26, April, 1927.

"Tausend Jahre vor Abraham." *Neue Freie Presse*, Vienna, February 27, 1927.

identification with Mizpah of Benjamin. Others had proposed different identifications. My own conclusions on this point have grown more and more definite during a quarter century of teaching of the Old Testament. No other site north of Jerusalem seems to me to accord so closely with the geographical references to Mizpah contained in the books of Judges, I Samuel, and Jeremiah. At a later time I hope to sum up in a special discussion the old and the new evidence for the equation Tell en-Nasbeh=Mizpah of Benjamin. Such a discussion seems premature while the work of excavation is in progress.

In deference to my friends, who have so generously supported this expedition, a personal word seems in place here regarding the nature of my interest in Near East archaeology. As Professor of Old Testament Literature I have for years been impressed with the importance of excavation as the only decisive means for the elucidation of certain special historical and biblical problems. Tentative plans for an expedition to the Hamath region in Syria were under way in 1914. But the outbreak of the Great War and the death of my friend John Muir obliged me to dismiss the enterprise. The succeeding years were devoted to the publication of my "Old Testament in the Light of To-Day" (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916), and the preparation of the "Life and Letters of John Muir" (1924), in addition to the editing of four posthumous Muir volumes.

In 1925 the way seemed open once more toward the Land of the Book. Income from the Muir volumes helped to smooth the way, and a number of friends to whom the enterprise appealed gave financial aid. My primary object during our first campaign was to pick out some unconsidered minor Tell (Arabic word for a mound under which ruins are supposed to lie) where I could work out and apply the most approved modern technique of excavation. Long observation and study of methods of archaeological excavation in the field had convinced me that excessive eagerness to make a showing with museum specimens is the bane of some recent as of much earlier excavation work. The primary purpose should

be the application of a technique that will enable us to unriddle, by all scientific means and at whatever pains, the meaning of the human materials embedded in the strata. Often the humblest of these materials—ashes, bones, potsherds, carbonized seeds, etc.—are the most revealing. Even a museum specimen is valuable only in proportion to our knowledge of its human background. Every fact turned up by the spade feeds that knowledge, and any fact overlooked by an excavator, or misread through haste and incomplete study, may be an irreparable loss.

My desire to leave nothing unexamined that might lead to an understanding of the best archaeological methods induced Mrs. Badé and myself to visit, during the autumn of 1925, the State Archaeological Museum at Santa Fe, New Mexico, and in particular the excavations of Phillips Academy conducted by Alfred V. Kidder at Pecos, New Mexico. At the latter site Dr. Kidder had worked out an ingenious and careful method of sequence dating based on pottery and other human artifacts. Certain physical and climatic characteristics of Arizona and New Mexico are so similar to those of the arid parts of Egypt and Palestine that human effort followed parallel lines in the endeavor to create easier and securer conditions of existence. Of particular interest to the archaeologist are striking parallel developments in the art of pottery making, so that Near Eastern and American Southwestern archaeology have fascinating points of contact both in methods and results. I wish to express my special obligations to Dr. Edgar L. Hewett, Director of the American School of Research at Santa Fe, for the generous way in which he placed the facilities of the Museum and the School at our disposal.

It was a fortunate circumstance for our enterprise that in 1925 Dr. Clarence S. Fisher was chosen by Dr. James Henry Breasted, Director of the Oriental Institute, to head the Megiddo Expedition of the University of Chicago. He was likewise to serve as Professor of Archaeology in the American School of Oriental Research. I immediately got in touch with him, expressing my practical interest in his plan



III. Pal. Inst. Photo. No. A463: Layer of ashes
near bottom of extramural dump. (See page 17).

for the coordination of American archaeological work in Palestine, as outlined by him in the "Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research," No. 18. During the early spring months of 1926, in Jerusalem, I was inducted into the painstaking technique which he has worked out, perfected, and applied through many years of excavation experience in Egypt, Mesopotamia and Palestine. He also loaned me Labib Sorial, one of his Egyptian assistants, and four experienced Egyptian gang leaders who could serve as trainers of local laborers.

For one who, like myself, was getting his footing in Palestinian excavation work, it is not easy to overstate the value of such an institution as the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem. Director Albright's superb knowledge of the land and its people, and his unfailing readiness to give help and advice in the novel situations that beset a beginner, are among my happy first-year memories of Jerusalem.

In the spring of 1927 Dr. Fisher took up his headquarters at Ramallah, within sight of our excavations, as Assistant Director of the Oriental Institute. Since he was devoting his energy to the preparation of his forthcoming *Corpus of Near East Pottery*, we were only too glad to give him office room at our headquarters where he could supervise the restoration and recording of our pottery, study and incorporate new forms, and advise us in special problems when occasion arose. The Expedition owes much to him, and to the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, which he represents.

Since it is a matter of the scientific equipment of the expedition, I wish to acknowledge here also the debt which we owe to Professor John Garstang, who was director of Antiquities for Palestine and Transjordan during the inception of our work at Tell en-Nasbeh. For many days he found time amid pressing official duties to give me an hour daily for the study of Palestinian ceramics, and the discussion of special excavation methods which he had found useful in his own wide field experience.

The first task was to reach a lease agreement with two part owners of Tell en-Nasbeh, which was accomplished with the aid of Dr. Albright and Mr. C. Lubbat, Governor of the Ramallah District. The agreement was signed in English and in Arabic, and provided that at the close of the season the excavation area must be covered up and left in arable condition so that the Arab farmers (Fellahin) can continue to cultivate the land. Such contracts are the usual procedure, unless the land is bought outright, which involves endless negotiation, a large initial outlay, and a continuing ex-

pense if the excavated structures are to form an outdoor museum.

The next step was the making of a general control map of the entire mound. This was accomplished with the aid of Mr. D. F. Higgins, then attached to the Megiddo Expedition, but formerly of the United States Geological Survey. For an entire week, daily from dawn to dark, we surveyed, mapped and contoured the mound, establishing bench-marks at intervals by cementing nails in holes drilled into bed-rock. Finally Mr. Higgins co-ordinated the entire survey with the General Survey of Palestine by reference to the nearest triangulation station, so that a thousand years from now everyone of our map stations, though lost in the meantime, can be re-established, if necessary, with mathematical accuracy. This control map, laid out in 50-metre quadrangles, serves as a basis for the detail maps laid out in 10-metre quadrangles on a scale of one to one hundred. Since many American readers are not familiar with the metric system, approximate quotations of measures and dimensions in this report are given in linear feet and inches. The exact dimensions can always be obtained by using the metric scale provided with the maps.

Tell en-Nasbeh lies on a commanding hill seven miles (thirteen kilometres) north of Jerusalem, on the west side of the Nablus (Shechem) road. When I first walked over it with Dr. Albright in February, 1926, wheat and barley crops, a few inches above the ground, were beginning to swathe it in delicate green. Copious rains had washed out of the soil great numbers of potsherds of various culture periods—a sure sign of long continued human occupation. At a few points along the slopes bits of ancient masonry protruded from the debris, but there was not enough to suggest the presence of a great wall hidden away under the red glow of the anemones that covered the untilled slopes.

It is now a well known fact that great buried structures may be detected by means of photographs taken from an aeroplane under a slanting light. Under such conditions the camera's eye catches and makes prominent the gentle con-



IV. German aeroplane photo of Tell en-Nasbeh showing coffin-shaped area. Published by permission of the German Government.

tours that have resulted from the settling of debris over unyielding structures. Realizing that during the war all the environs of Jerusalem and the approaches from the north had been repeatedly photographed for military purposes by the opposing forces, I went on a systematic hunt for aeroplane photographs of the Tell en-Nasbeh region. One, published by Professor Dalman as No. 24 in his "Hundert deutsche Fliegerbilder aus Palaestina," showed significant contours on Tell en-Nasbeh. I felt sure that if I could secure an enlargement from the original negative I should probably be able to trace the course of the city wall if one lay buried there. But the original was deposited in the Bavarian Archives of the War in Germany. Taking a chance, I wrote to Professor Dalman and stated my case, requesting his aid in securing an enlargement from the German Government. It is a fine tribute to the freemasonry of scientific research that the desired enlargement was promptly furnished without charge. It fully confirmed what I suspected, that a city wall of undetermined size fenced in on all sides a curiously coffin-shaped area. With the aid of this photograph and our general survey map, I was able to select a point on the southeast corner of the Tell where the contour suggested the presence of a large buried structure. Half an hour after we began digging there, on the day before Easter, 1926, we struck the top of a surprisingly thick wall. It later proved to be the city wall, fortified at that point by a corner tower.

Before taking up special discussions of the excavational results, it seems appropriate to say something about our equipment, general methods, and the organization of our staff. We owe to Major W. C. Gotshall, the distinguished railroad engineer of New York City, a number of valuable instruments of precision, among them a Gurley Plane Table, a Kern Alidade, a French Secretan Transit, and a pair of Keuffel & Esser Proportional Dividers. Other special equipment was purchased in Jerusalem and in London, or was made by native carpenters of Ramallah from designs furnished to them. Mr. George E. Stone, Director of the Visual Education Service, Inc., kindly superintended the selection and

purchase of our entire photographic equipment, which proved very satisfactory.

It has been a part of our method to excavate to bedrock, by successive levels, every square foot as far as we go. Similarly every stone of any wall still in place has been drawn to scale on our maps. The only exception is in the case of the great city wall, where only the stones of the outer and inner faces of the wall have been drawn to scale, the filling stones being indicated conventionally. To run trenches and guess at what lies under unmoved debris between them is precarious. The systematic excavation and accurate mapping of all structures, strip by strip and level by level, is more expensive, but in the end far more revealing. By this method the meaning of structures uncovered and mapped the first season became increasingly evident in the light of the next season's work.

During the first season our staff was small, and we had to conduct our operations on a scale that enabled us to control the archaeological output. Whenever necessary we reduced our gang. Major Gotshall was with us at the beginning. Mr. D. F. Higgins, as already stated, made the original survey, and Dr. Fisher's assistant, Labib Sorial, undertook the mapping. Abu Wareida acted as "rais," or general foreman, during both seasons. At different times we had special assistance from Father Charles Bridgman of St. George's Cathedral, Jerusalem; Professor R. P. Dougherty of Yale University, and Dr. Sheldon Blank, then a Fellow at the American School of Oriental Research. But the general efficiency and well-being of the expedition owed most to Mr. and Mrs. Willard Jones, and Mr. A. Edward Kelsey, of the American Friends Mission and Schools at Ramallah. The Friends Boys School was the home of the expedition, while Maloufia, a stone house at the foot of the Tell, was its working headquarters.

In 1927 our staff was considerably larger. Dr. Fisher was with us again. Dr. Elihu Grant of Haverford College, who has since conducted an expedition of his own at Ain Shems, became a member of our staff and proved most helpful in a

variety of capacities. Dr. George P. Hedley, Assistant in the Old Testament Department of the Pacific School of Religion, was photographer and recorder. Mr. Labib Sorial again did the surveying, drawing, and plane table work. Abu Wareida again served as "rais." Toward the end of June Messrs. Philip K. Swartz and J. Forrest Chapman, members of the teaching staff of the American College at Salonika, Greece, joined our forces, helping especially in the pottery restoration work. On special occasions during both seasons we were able to secure the aid of Messrs. Beaumont and H. L. Larsson of the American Colony in Jerusalem; the former made some architectural restorations, and the latter took special photographs during the first season.

PALESTINIAN AGES OF CULTURE,

according to the Chronology agreed upon in 1925,
with brief notes indicating the degree of their representation
at Tell en-Nasbeh

	Date B. C.
Paleolithic	x
So far no clearly recognizable artifacts	
Neolithic	x-3000
Flint artifacts; perhaps cruder forms of pottery in lowest level of Pre-Semitic tombs	
Aeneolithic	3000-2500
Pre-Semitic tomb groups with painted pottery	
Beginning of Semitic occupation, about	2500
Early Bronze	2500-2000
The inner circuit wall, and ceramic remains in a number of places; Early and Middle Bronze Age levels were partly removed and largely disturbed during the Early Iron Age.	
Middle Bronze	2000-1500
The great city wall; levels fragmentarily represented in area excavated to date	
Late Bronze	1500-1200
Occupation levels as above	

Iron Age I	1200- 800
Well represented by house levels and cistern deposits	
Iron Age II	800- 586
Particularly well represented; great variety of pottery	
Exilic, to Seleucidan period	586- 300
Represented in several places by the surface level	
Seleucidan or Hellenistic	300- 50
Some remains in cisterns and silos; coins	
Roman	B. C. 50 to A. D. 300
Roman antiquities were found in considerable abundance around a tower at the north end of the Tell.	
Byzantine	A. D. 300 to 650
Coins	

The City Wall

Although the German aeroplane photograph showed the presence of a buried city wall, we were not prepared for the formidable nature of the defences which excavation brought to light. As already mentioned, our initial contact with the great wall was made on the first day of digging in March, 1926, when we struck it in the center of quadrangle AM26. The wall had been strengthened at this point by a tower projecting nearly seven feet from the wall, and having a frontal width of about thirty feet. The base of the tower was enveloped by a revetment, or glacis, built of somewhat smaller stones than those used in the tower and the wall. The ensemble of wall, tower, and revetment is shown on the map in horizontal section at the level to which all three had been razed before debris began to accumulate above them. The revetment slope has a gradient line that must have met the tower at a height of about twenty feet above its base.

On a rain-washed spring morning the following season—



V. Pal. Inst. Photo. No. 82. Plaster on outer face of city wall at AN 22. Section cut away to show rocks behind.

March, 1927—I again stood on the southern slope of the mound which had yielded such surprising revelations the preceding year. Pink cyclamen and red anemones made splashes of color among a chaos of rocks that here and there still gave hint of the part they once played in the pomp and power of other days. I knew from the previous year the probable course of the buried city wall, and decided to approach it with a wide trench cut at right angles to it, so that a cross-section of the stratification and ruins might tell its own story—the extramural story—of successive cities that rose and perished long ago. This trench, twelve feet wide and running from the bottom of the slope to the top, a distance of more than two hundred feet, proved extraordinarily rewarding. At the foot of the slope bed-rock was reached at a depth of eighteen feet, and the stratification showed that the debris had been brought from within the city wall and dumped down an incline to find its own angle of repose. Not far from the bottom of the dump was a fairly thick stratum of ashes. (See plate, Page 8). Since pottery and other antiquities occurred in the reverse order of their age, the bottom stratum gave the time when the clearance had been made—about the ninth century B. C.

On approaching the city wall we encountered a chaos of great rocks which must have been precipitated from above when the wall was demolished. We are assuming for the present, on general evidence, that it was during the Late Bronze Age. Many of the stones in the lower debris were so large that three or four workmen could not move them. Since the height of the wall still standing was sometimes in excess of twenty-five feet on the outside, these stones had been lifted to a place in the wall above that height.

When the face of the wall had been cleared of debris, the outside of it was found covered, to a height of fifteen or eighteen feet from the bottom, with a thick coating of hard yellow plaster, which at a distance must have given the wall the appearance of having been carved out of solid rock. The plaster, apparently, had been made of soft pulverized limestone. What purpose could this have served?

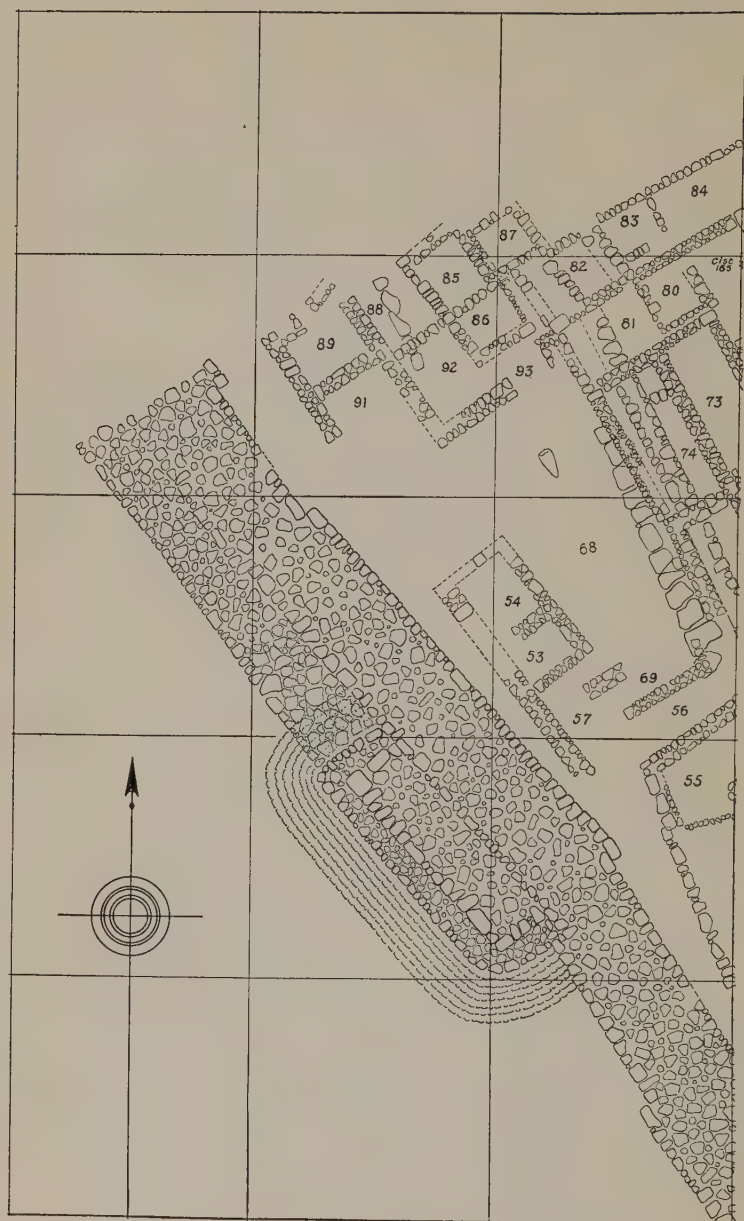


VI. Pal. Inst. Photo. No. 81. View along outer face of wall at AN 21 and 22. Ladder against revetment.

The reader must bear in mind that the wall throughout was built of limestone rocks laid in clay mortar. The largest rocks were ranged along the outside of the wall, the smaller ones within. But clay mortar is soft and weathers out from the crevices between the rocks. It would not have been difficult for attackers to scale the wall by digging out hand-holds and foot-holds between the rough, undressed rocks, if the joints were visible. The purpose of the plaster is most plausibly explained by supposing that it was intended to render such feats difficult, by concealing the joints between the rocks. The limited height to which the plastering was carried also fits this supposition. The reader's attention is invited to the illustration which shows a section of the plaster cut away, revealing the shape and joints of the rocks behind.

Another mural feature remains to be mentioned: the bottom foundation of the wall consisted of a platform of immense rocks, a yard or more in thickness, and projecting a foot or two beyond its face. The vertical crevices between them had been left unfilled as if to provide drainage. Similar foundations, if I am rightly informed, are reported for the Jebusite wall of Jerusalem.

As we continued the digging operations westward, there emerged two additional towers of similar structure and dimensions. One again protected an angle of the wall, but the other formed a protuberance on a comparatively straight line of wall. The tower in AN 20 and 21 was fortified with a particularly high and well-built revetment. The horizontal diameter of the wall, tower and revetment on top was twenty-nine feet, and by estimate about thirty-five feet at the bottom. What remained of the tower above the revetment, as Dr. Fisher was the first to observe, gave clear indications of reconstruction after a previous destruction. This restoration doubtless was carried out coincidentally with the widening and rebuilding of the wall northwest of the third tower, as shown in AJ 17 and 18. All three towers form separate units structurally, being built up in close contact with the wall, but so that the line of demarcation is clearly visible. Yet so far as the evidence goes the towers are contemporaneous with the



VII. Detail of rebuilt wall in AJ and AK 18.

wall, and are not subsequent additions. This method of salient tower construction, therefore, was a part of the builders' intention. If a tower was battered down, the wall behind it still presented a smooth front of cyclopean rocks.

In addition to the salient towers we found at fairly regular intervals what appear to have been towers integrated with the wall and extending only a foot and a half or two feet beyond its face. There are four of them in the four hundred and fifty feet of wall which we have excavated to date.

A peculiar phenomenon is presented by the wall beyond the big tower in AK 18. The revetment with which the tower was originally provided now is completely buried on one side in the present wall, and ends against the face of the original Bronze Age wall. The accompanying photograph (page 22) affords a view along the top at that point. The addition to the old wall from the tower northward is of later and poorer workmanship. A section cut into it revealed Iron Age pottery in the clay between the stones, and those who, like myself, are inclined to identify the site with the ancient Mizpah of Benjamin will have no difficulty in finding here a corroboration of the passage in I Kings 15:16, which relates that Asa of Judah fortified the walls of Mizpah against the encroachments of the Northern Kingdom. The archaeological evidence shows that the Bronze Age wall, which one time made the city a formidable fortress, had then long been lying in ruins. Therefore the Hebrew writer does not speak of a rebuilding process. Nevertheless the Israelite masons built upon earlier foundations, and as the result of their work the west-side wall attains the extraordinary thickness of twenty-six feet. But even the old Bronze Age wall has a thickness of twenty feet in AM 22 and 23.

So far as the writer is aware, this is the thickest and strongest city wall which has yet been unearthed in Palestine. It so captured our imaginations last season that we spent much time and labor in freeing the whole southern outside face to bedrock, in order to be able to study its structure. There were several incidental rewards, one of them being the discovery, alluded to above, that ninth or tenth century Is-



VIII. Pal. Inst. Photo. No. 221. View along the top of the city wall
from AK 19 northward. Width twenty-six feet.

raelites had destroyed most of the Bronze Age levels within that part of the city by excavating and dumping the materials over the partly degraded wall. By so doing they left Early Bronze Age pottery on top and Iron Age pottery at the bottom.

I have mentioned the fact that the southwest corner tower (AN 20 and 21) had a particularly high revetment. Its slant indicated that the tower and wall at this point must have been approximately forty feet or more in height. According to Old Testament tradition, the Israelite scouts sent into Canaan to spy out the land returned with the report not only that the inhabitants were of gigantic stature, but that the walls of their cities reached unto heaven.* In view of the magnitude of the walls we have found, they may be excused for a little rhetorical exaggeration.

On account of the great width of the wall, the city's defenders doubtless could be moved along the top to meet attacks from the outside. But provision seems also to have been made for the rapid movement of troops from point to point within the wall, by keeping open a space of considerable width between the outer city wall and the narrow inner one, beyond which thus far no Bronze Age houses have been found. This intramural belt deserves separate discussion.

The Intramural Area

A very interesting feature of ancient city construction is represented by what we shall call the intramural area. By this we mean the area of varying width which lies between the great outer wall and the narrow inner wall, whose course can be traced from AJ26 around to AH19, bisecting the sanctuary in AL21. This wall is very old, probably dating back to the Early Bronze Age. In the upper level of this intramural area we uncovered a row of fourteen storage bins which seem for the most part to have been of exilic and post-

*This expression occurs in Deuteronomy I:28, but doubtless is an echo of the scout reports mentioned in Numbers XIII: 28-33.



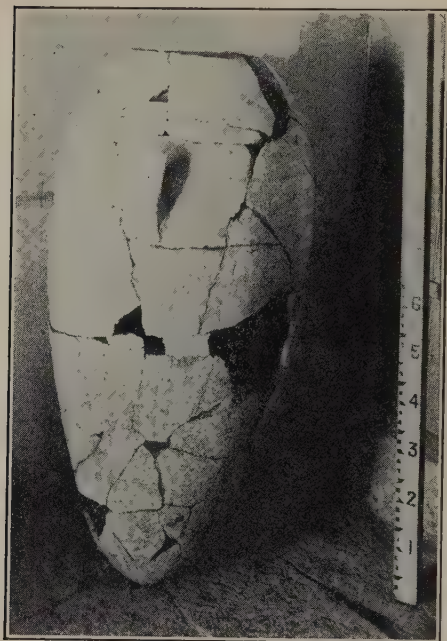
IX. Plaster model restoration of city wall from AL 19 to AM 26. Upper part conjectural.

exilic origin. Nos. 129 and 131 were found in the Early Bronze Age level, and are of somewhat different construction. It is evident that this type of storage bin is of ancient lineage. Two, also, were found in the Israelite sanctuary.

The most interesting one, No 9, was found during the first campaign. It had been built over the mouth of a rock-hewn cistern in such a way that the stone which sealed the cistern formed the bottom of the bin. Both the latter and the cistern-mouth within are shown in the upper part of AM 25. This cistern, by the way, is the only one that has thus far been found within the intramural area, though twenty-two were found inside of the inner wall.

The sealed cistern (No. 31) has received a good deal of publicity because of the possibility that it might have been the one into which the bodies of Gedaliah and his murdered companions were thrown. Since the evidence that Tell en-Nasbeh is Mizpah of Benjamin has during the last season become practically conclusive, this cistern calls for more particular mention even in this preliminary report. In the first place, it seems improbable that a post-exilic builder of a grain bin accidentally struck the mouth of a discarded cistern. Again, the mouth had been sealed with care to prevent grain from falling through, and the inside showed a recently plastered, comparatively clean cistern, whose active use was cut short by the sealing of its mouth. In the third place, the cistern apparently served a kind of citadel represented by the great tower in AM 26, and by a large thick-walled structure in AL 25 (Rooms marked 1, 3, 7). The latter may well have been the headquarters of an official.

When opened, the cistern was found to contain a cone of loose debris rising three or four feet from the bottom; underneath was a shallow, water-laid layer of late Iron Age or Exilic pottery, mostly water jars. The color and texture of the pottery is the same as that which is found in the upper layer of cisterns that were used down to, or a little after, the Exile. This point I would not stress, for it is admittedly difficult to date by pottery within so narrow a margin. The cistern had recently been replastered, and where the plaster had



X. Pal. Inst. Photo. No. 244.
Object No. 510 temporarily restored.

scaled off were to be seen freshly made pick marks by which the plaster had been keyed to the wall. According to ancient beliefs, bodies of the dead affected with ritual pollution that which they touched. If a corpse had been thrown into a cistern, that cistern would be regarded as defiled and defiling, and be withdrawn from use. It was apparently no unusual thing to hide the evidence of murder in a cistern. One opened last season contained a human skull, whose presence probably never had been previously discovered.

In AJ 19 and AK 20 there is shown on bedrock, along the outside base of the inner wall, something that resembles an ancient stone-paved path. This conclusion is strengthened by the fact that the two Bronze Age storage bins were situated along its edge. If it originally extended through and beyond the area now occupied by the sanctuary, we must as-



XI. Pal. Inst. Photo. No. 176. Middle Bronze Age storage jar,
No. 510, as found in AH 19.

sume that it was removed during building operations. During the Middle Bronze Age, therefore, this part of the intramural area seems to have been a market occupied by merchants and grain vendors; and many hundreds of years later the Jews of the late Iron Age, if we may judge by the upper-level grain bins, were still devoting this area to marketing. The space may also have served, in time of war, to shelter domestic animals and refugees from unprotected villages.

In 1927 we made in this intramural area a most interesting discovery, which agrees with the suggestions made in the preceding paragraph. In the lower left hand corner of AH 19 we found a large broken storage jar of Middle Bronze Age type. It was in the lowest level, in contact with bedrock, and therefore may be of nearly the same age as the great outer wall. Apparently it was left where it fell from a beast of burden. The rim of the mouth unfortunately was not found. Photographs taken of the jar "in situ," and later as it appeared temporarily restored, are shown herewith. At various places in the same level were found bits of painted ware that indicated trade relations with Cyprus and Crete. Such, for instance, is a fragment of pottery with the head of a fish painted on it in red.

In an angle of the outer wall, southwest of the sanctuary, was found a curious structure exhibiting the shape of a tennis racket. The depression along the main axis was a long fire-box from which four flues curved outward and upward. It was clearly the remains of a great kiln, possibly for firing storage jars, for a large deposit of broken fragments of "zirs," as they are called by the Arabs, was found in the vicinity. North of the kiln was a stone enclosure filled with grayish-black ashes, of which samples were taken for chemical analysis. The kiln has clearly had a long history, for it is older than the great wall. The latter is built over the west edge of the kiln, whose presence doubtless was the reason why the inner edge of the wall at this point is concave, whereas opposite the tower in AM 26 it was made straight. The ash-dump at the rear of the kiln must, on the other hand, be an accommodation to the presence of the sanctuary.

Room for a passage had to be left between the latter and the kiln, and the space in front of the furnace-tunnel was needed for fuel and the products of operation. It clearly continued in use during the later period of the temple, and one may raise the question whether it had any special uses in connection with the latter.

At the beginning of the digging season in 1927 we confidently expected to find the South Gate in quadrangle AM20. A corner of the great tower projected above the debris at this point, and one of the aged Arab owners of the hill said it had long been known as "Bab el-Kuds," (the Jerusalem Gate), doubtless because it looked southward toward Jerusalem. Excavation proved that no gate had ever been there.

However, we may now regard it as certain that a small gate pierced the wall in the southeast corner of AM23. A section of the inner wall, marked by dotted lines, is missing at that point, and short spurs of walls projecting inward from the big wall probably are the remains of structures for barricading the entrance. The great offset in the wall at AN 23 will have covered the approach to the gate from the outside. The thickness of the wall at the offset in AM and AN 23 is nearly twenty-four feet. Outside the wall, in quadrangles AN 24 and 25, we found an embankment buttressed with a retaining wall on the lower side. On top of it probably was the road or path, which approached the gateway at a fairly steep gradient. The ground level within the city was at this point much higher than that outside, because the wall was built on a sloping rock surface. This made it necessary to have the point of ingress rather high up in the wall, and in consequence the demolition of the latter carried with it also the gateway.

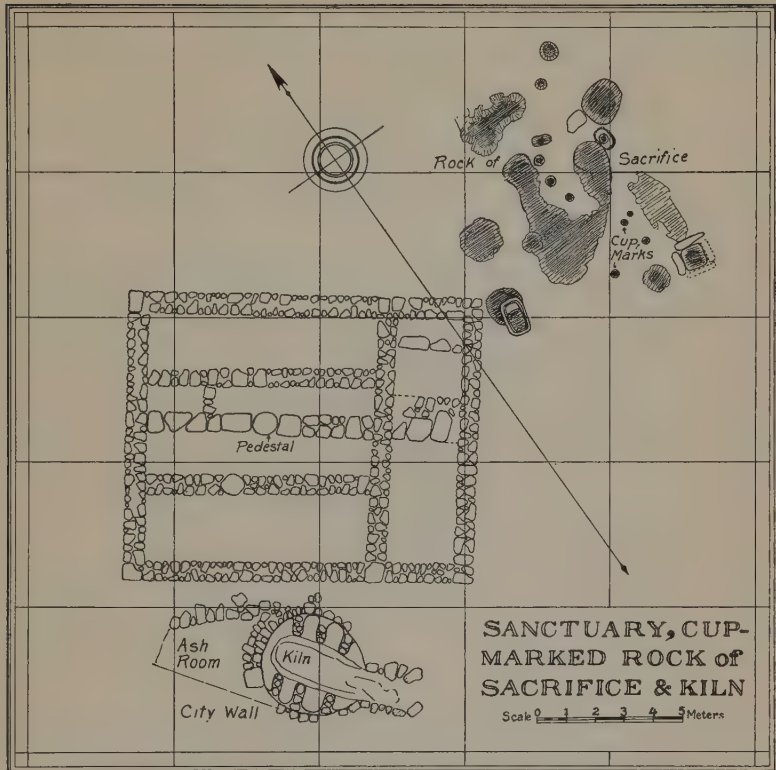
Since a copious spring, still known as Ain Nasbeh, lies a little distance down on the southeastern slope of the hill, the most frequented path probably led from the gate to this spring. Apart from all other considerations one may say without fear of contradiction that no ancient city, having a fine spring outside of its walls, would have left itself without means of access to the water. They would either have

sunk a tunnel to it, or left a way of approach through the wall. There is no tunnel, and the point indicated in AM 23 is the only place where the gate could have been. Another corroborative circumstance is the fact that the great Israelite excavation dump of the ninth or tenth century B. C. lies immediately outside the above-mentioned section of the wall, and along the course of the embankment on which the path may have been.

An Israelite Sanctuary

Toward the end of April, 1927, we struck in area AL22 something that was mystifying at first. On the surface and partly projecting from the earth were two basins, to be mentioned again later in this discussion. One was made of large flat stones set on edge to form a square, and the inside was cemented, a sure sign of its comparatively late origin. About sixteen feet west of it was another of ovoid form, also cemented within. Not far beneath the surface, between them, was found an outcrop of limestone bedrock which was cup-marked. There were also four or five larger artificial depressions in the rock; one was oblong, the other round. All were drawn to scale in outline on the map. On the northwest side the rock presented a scarp of flattish crescent shape, and all around the margin of the crescent a strip of rock eighteen inches wide had broken off and sagged down, because there was no support from beneath. Excavations showed that there had been under the rock a natural or artificial grotto, which had connections with the surface. The rock was so disintegrated in places that I could not make out whether the channels were natural or artificial.

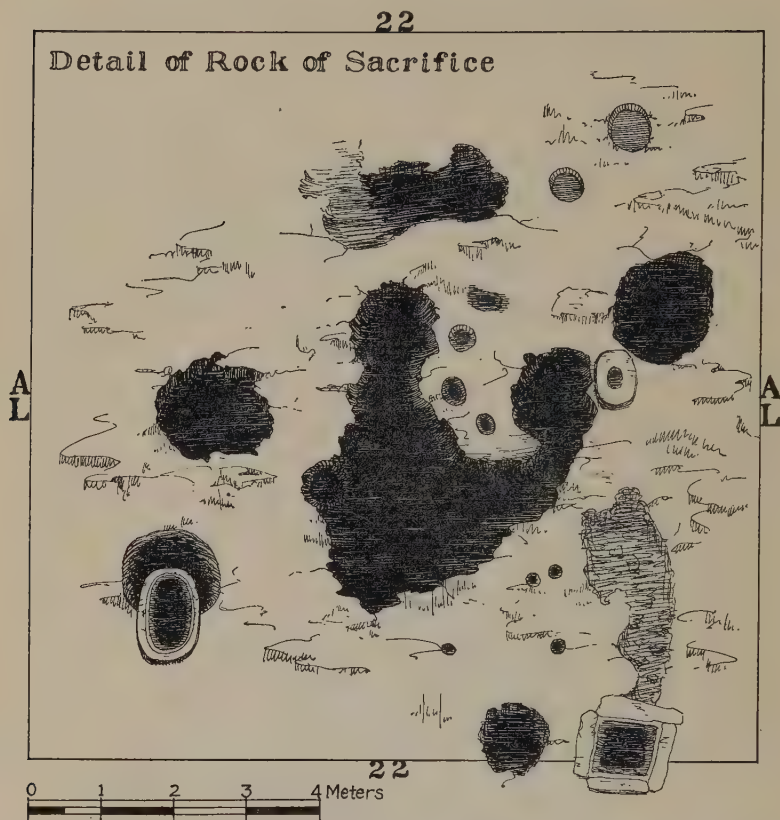
The thought presented itself several times that this rock must have been used for sacrificial purposes, but as yet we had not found anything else in the neighborhood to confirm this surmise. In a few days, however, the corner of a large building began to appear to the west of the cup-marked rock. To the practised eye of Dr. Clarence S. Fisher the size of the building indicated something unusual, and while discussing



XII. Orientation and detail of temple and high place.

it with me he drew a ground-plan to which it would probably be found to conform if it should prove to be a sanctuary. When fully cleared of debris the building corresponded exactly to his outline plan.

Facing southward toward the place of sacrifice was a room running the full width of the building, about eight by thirty feet on the inside. Set at right angles to this room, and parallel to each other, were three rooms of which the central one was the largest—about ten feet wide and twenty-six feet long. Through the center of this room, and bisecting also the entrance room, ran a wall of different big-stone masonry,



XIII. Black patches mark disintegrations of the rock. The large central one was connected with the grotto underneath.

which formed part of an old Canaanite "Ringmauer," or encircling wall, dating back to an earlier stage of the city's history. The fact that the sanctuary was not only saddled over this wall, but extended by half into an intramural area devoted to special uses during the Bronze Age, showed that we were dealing here with an Israelite sanctuary.

Near the center of this inner room, and resting upon the Canaanite wall, stood a roughly rounded stone, chipped flat on its upper surface, which probably was used as a pedestal



XIV. Pal. Inst. Photo. No. 94. Sanctuary viewed from the north-east. Entrance room on the left.

for an altar of offerings; it did not seem of sufficient height to have been the altar itself. To one who reflects on the eternal borrowing of one religion and culture from another, this stone is no inapt symbol of the essential coherence and continuity of human institutions. Nor is it the only stone from the Canaanite wall that was made to do service in the Israelite sanctuary; the northeast and northwest corner stones probably came from the same source.

Rooms 22 and 26, which flanked the central room or "holy of holies," contained a grain bin each, and were probably used for storage and for the accommodation of priests. In No. 26 also were found two flint-knives, one slightly saw-edged, the other with a smooth cutting edge. Being found in a room of the sanctuary, the latter may conceivably have been used as a circumcision knife. It is a large flake of flint smoothed by long use. No complete jars were found in the temple, but there were many potsherds—all Iron Age pottery of the Israelite type.

We naturally examined and conserved with special care the objects found in the cisterns near the temple. Among them were handleless conical jars, with respect to which I venture the suggestion that they were devoted to the uses of the sanctuary. One in particular was found at the bottom of a cistern adjacent to the high place. It runs to a rather sharp conical point at the bottom, and no woman could possibly have carried it on her head, when filled with water. Perhaps that was the purpose of jars of this form. In Joshua 9:21 a Hebrew writer states that enslaved Gibeonites were used as temple servants, and that one of their functions was to draw water for the use of the sanctuary. This carries with it the suggestion that such service was an exclusive function of men, who would, as in the modern Near East, carry such jars in their arms and not on their heads. Our readers may be interested to know that ej-Jib,* traditionally identified as the biblical Gibeon, was always in view to the west of us as we were working on the site of the sanctuary.

*So pronounced by the local *fellahin*. Strictly speaking, the correct form would be el-Jib.



XV. Pal. Inst. Photo. No. 91. Sanctuary viewed from the north-west.
Grotto under rock of sacrifice seen behind man in left foreground.

It may not be amiss to add that some of the cup-shaped depressions on the sacrificial rock fitted the conical base of the jars. Since no fragments of ring-bases were found in the immediate neighborhood, some of these cupmarks may have been used to hold the conical water jars in an upright position.

On Saturday, the seventh of May, 1927, the remains of the sanctuary were lying open once more to the sky. Whether it suffered destruction during Josiah's reformation (B. C. 621), or during Nebuchadrezzar's conquest of Jerusalem (B. C. 586), could not be determined by any direct evidence. Israelite houses in the vicinity of the temple seem to have been overtaken by a sudden destruction, for a cooking pot, in one house, was left in the fire; and the crudely squared, yard-long stone pilasters, that probably supported the wood uprights on which rested the roof, were still in position under the debris precipitated by its collapse.

One would expect similar pilasters to have done service in the structure of the sanctuary, especially in what must have been the vestibule room facing the rock of sacrifice. But not a single one was found in the temple area, nor any orthostat, or stone pillar, that might have served as a "mazzebah." Could this have been due to a deliberate and officially directed destruction of all sanctuaries outside of Jerusalem, as commanded in Deuteronomy, and recorded as carried into effect in the twenty-third chapter of II Kings? Such a destruction would naturally have been more thorough than one that would have overtaken such a structure during the sacking and burning of a city. It must be remembered, too, that an interval of thirty-five years elapsed between Josiah's reformation and the coming of Nebuchadrezzar. The ebb and flow of an ancient city's life over the abandoned temple site would then have tended further to erase the remains of its structure. Any reader may judge this evidence for himself. To the writer it seems to point to the period of Josiah rather than to a later destruction.

All the walls of the sanctuary had been set on bedrock. Those of Room 22 still were standing to a height of seven



XVI. Pal. Inst. Photo. No. A419c. Handleless conical jar No. 152 in cistern 119. (See page 34)

feet, probably because bedrock at the northwest corner was lower and the wall had been sunk through debris. In most places only three or four feet of masonry remained. In short, the walls were razed to what was the ground level at the time of destruction. Every vestige of the roof, pilasters and entrances, had disappeared so completely that we could gain no hint of their nature. Examination of the corners disclosed no foundation sacrifices.

A ruin of such absorbing interest to both Jews and Christians should probably have been left open to view as a monument of antiquity. But unless the Palestinian government should expropriate the Fellahin owners of the land and provide for a permanent guard, all the best stones would soon be carried away for building purposes. Besides, I was under contract with the landowners to cover up the excavations, so that barley and lentils might once more spread their roots

over the remains of an illustrious antiquity. In any case they are safe from Fellahin vandalism under a blanket of tillable soil.

It may not be inappropriate to recall at this point some of the biblical references to the sanctuary of Mizpah. Under the leadership of Samuel the forces of the Israelites were on supreme occasions repeatedly assembled at Mizpah (Judges 20:1, I Samuel 7:5, 10:17). The language employed leaves no doubt that the rallying point was the sanctuary, where the people were to appear "before Yahweh." It was at the same place, according to the account in I Samuel 10:17,24, that Saul was chosen king by the use of the sacred lot, a ceremony that could only be performed at a sanctuary. The choice of Mizpah as the Judean governor's residence after the destruction of Jerusalem (II Kings 25:22-25; Jeremiah 40:5, 41:16) probably was motivated quite as much by its ancient religious associations as by its strategical importance. For when finally Judas Maccabaeus chose Mizpah as his stronghold it was because "in Mizpah there was a place of prayer aforetime for Israel" (I Maccabees 3:46).

The finding of an Israelite sanctuary at Tell en-Nasbeh is, therefore, precisely what we would expect if the Tell is identical with Mizpah of Benjamin. The Maccabaeian statement that Mizpah was situated "over against Jerusalem" is also correctly descriptive, for during the entire period of our excavation parts of Jerusalem and the buildings on the Mount of Olives were always clearly visible. In Quadrangle AJ 19 and elsewhere are shown the foundations of flimsily constructed buildings which were definitely identified as Maccabaeian by the coins found in them. In view of this clearly marked Maccabaeian occupation of the site we may properly raise the question whether the two cemented basins of the top level at the high place may not be also of Maccabaeian origin.

As our work progressed the time came when we had to cover up the ancient high place and the ruined sanctuary. As I stood in the vestibule of the temple on Friday morning, May 6, 1927, and looked southward across one of the most

eventful stretches of country in all biblical history, I could not help feeling that some public ceremony of recognition should precede the re-burial of the sanctuary. For more than twenty-five hundred years it had lain hidden from sight on the hill which afforded a commanding view of Ramah (er-Ram), the traditional home of Samuel; of Gibeah (Tell el-Ful), the home of Saul; and beyond that of the towers of Jerusalem—all men and places intimately associated with the sanctuary of Mizpah. I turned to my associates on the staff and raised the question of a religious service to be held there on Sunday afternoon, May 8th, with joint participation by Jews, Christians and Mohammedans: for in the historical retrospect each of these religious groups was part of a stream of development whose fountain head was in such sanctuaries as that of Mizpah.

The suggestion met with immediate approval. Our friend A. Edward Kelsey, head of the Friends' Mission at Ramallah, consented to organize and preside over the meeting. Our workers were invited, and news of the proposal traveled like wildfire among the neighboring villages. That Sunday afternoon witnessed a strange and novel sight. Gaily garbed groups of people came stringing over the yellowing fields from every direction, and condensing into throngs on the slopes of Tell en-Nasbeh, climbed three hundred feet to the summit—modern pilgrims come to pay homage at an ancient sanctuary. Before long the temple area and the surrounding dump-heaps were covered with one of the most cosmopolitan audiences I have ever seen. The voices of pupils and teachers from the two Friends' Schools for Palestinian boys and girls led with contagious fervour in singing the old hymn, "Oh, God, our help in ages past," which could not have been more fitting to the occasion if it had been written for it. Dr. Magnes, President of the Hebrew University at Jerusalem, read the 121st Psalm in Hebrew; Mr. Kelsey read a part of Whittier's "Worship;" Mr. A. Willard Jones, headmaster of the Friends' Boys' School, read in English a poem entitled "Palestine First;" and he was followed by Dr. Khalil Totah, who read one under the same title in Arabic. I spoke



NVII. Pal. Inst. Photo. No. 96. Crowd assembling for religious service in Israelite sanctuary, May 8, 1927.

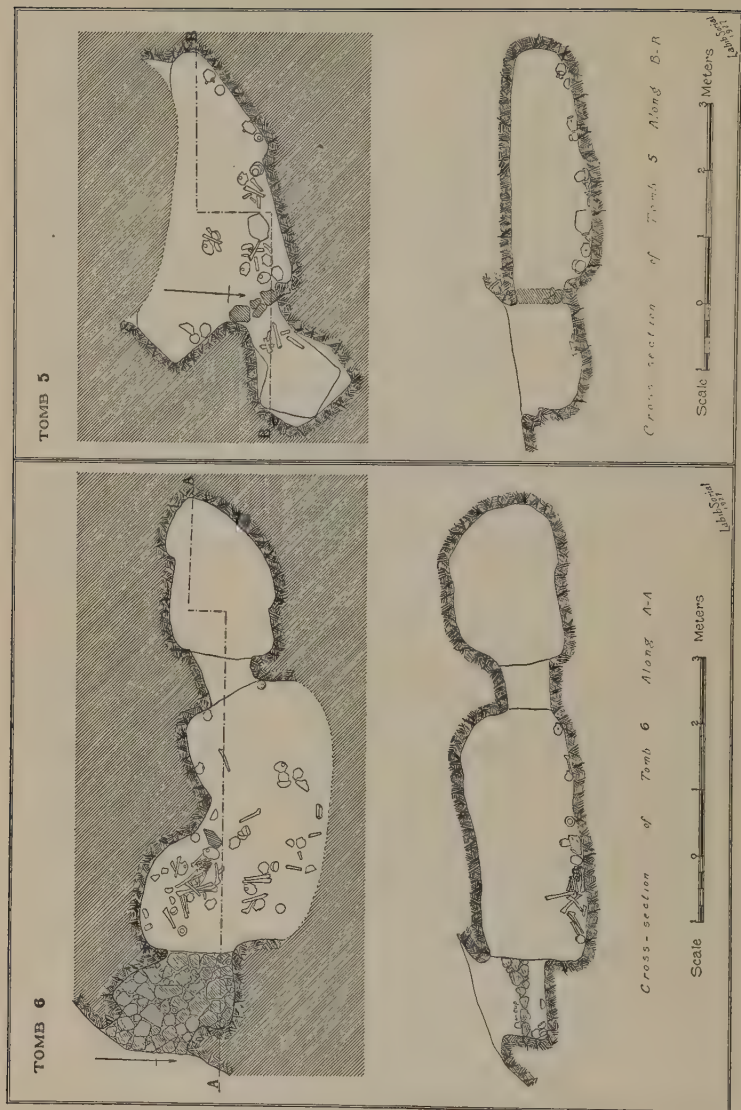
on the historical significance of the sanctuary. The service closed with the Aaronic benediction. The next day long lines of basket carriers covered from sight the traces at once of our meeting and of the sanctuary.

Pre-Semitic Tombs

The most interesting individual find during the 1926 season consisted of two very ancient tombs which had originally been excavated in the natural limestone of the hill when its rock surface was still exposed to the weather. The presence of Cave Tomb 5 was first detected when a few fragmentary human remains were found in the bottom of a grain bin, No. 3 in AK 26. The latter, sunk during the Israelite period of occupation, had penetrated the thin rock ceiling of the tomb, exposing some fragments of bones. Search of the surrounding rock surface soon revealed the original opening of the tomb, and within the passage as well as somewhat in front of it were parts of broken human femurs and tibiae showing that the tomb had been entered and disturbed.

Meanwhile I made a careful examination of the exposed limestone surface extending from Tomb 5 toward the inner edge of the great city wall. At one point I found a scarp about a foot and a half high with a slight depression in front of it. Calling one of the workmen who had already abandoned the surface as "nadif" (cleaned), I made him scrape and brush the surface. An irregular bedding of small stones was found in front of the scarp, and its appearance suggested that it was not accidental; accordingly photographs were taken before it was investigated further. When the stones were removed, a small passage was found to go down into the rock about thirty centimetres vertically, and then to lead horizontally to what later proved to be the cave chamber of Tomb 6. The entrances to the two tombs* were nearly three metres apart, but the partition wall between

*In earlier reports and photographs these same tombs are designated as Nos. I. and II.



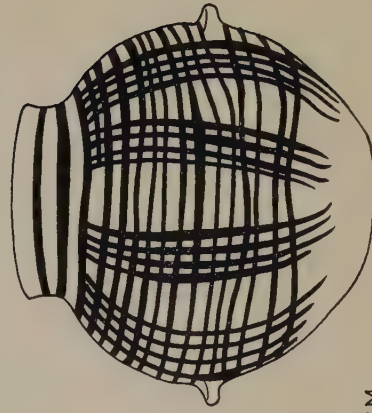
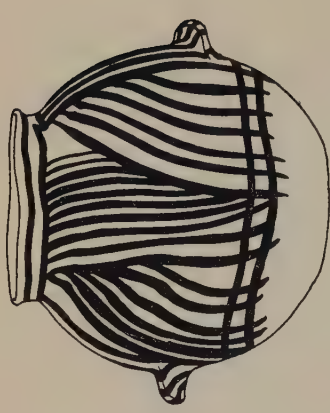
XVIII. Structural details of Pre-Semitic Cave Tombs 5 and 6.

them on the inside was either very thin or had actually been broken through.

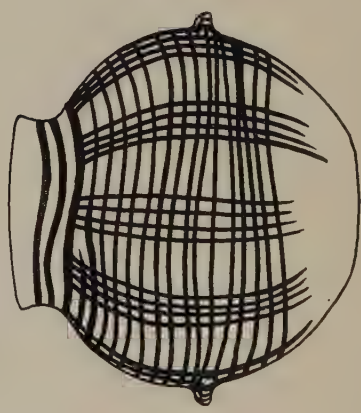
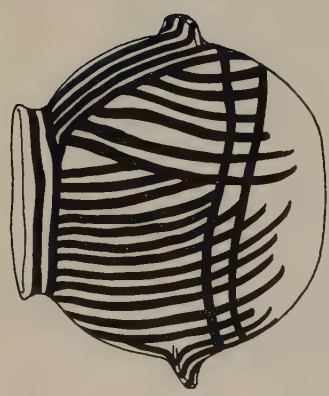
Both tombs were solidly filled with earth and rock debris. Some unfilled space must have been left in them when they were abandoned, for they had been entered and rifled of valuables, presumably by the Middle Bronze Age builders of the great city wall. Several dozens of carnelian beads, one large barrel bead of gold, and one gold ring had been overlooked and were recovered. In the search for these gold ornaments and necklaces of beads, the jars, bowls, and other receptacles deposited with the dead had been turned topsy-turvy, and in part broken. The human remains were found in an equally disturbed condition, so that only in the case of one skeleton in Tomb 6 was it possible to determine that the dead had been deposited in a lying and extended position.



XIX. Pal. Inst. Photo. No. A103. Tomb 6 after removal of the disintegrated roof. Some pottery visible.



OBJECT No 18
& OBJECT No 36
VIEWED FROM
OPPOSITE SIDES



XX. Examples of Pre-Semitic painted pots. Hematite red lines on buff ware.

The contents of the tombs were removed carefully by successive six-inch levels, nearly three weeks being required for this knife-and-brush process. Since the limestone roof of the tombs was decayed, and liable to collapse, it was removed, and the top layer of pottery showed that it was of the type described by R. A. S. Macalister as "Pre-Semitic." As layer after layer was taken out, there began to appear those slight modifications of form and decoration which mark progressive changes of style within a homogeneous culture era. It was evident that the tombs had been used for a long time by the same racial stock. Mandibular and cranial data showed that more than seventy-five bodies had been deposited in Tomb 6. But the total number must have been much larger, since near the bottom many bodies had been reduced completely to dust. Remembering that Macalister had found in one of his "Troglodyte" burial caves at Gezer a mass of burnt human remains, we were on the look-out for a similar phenomenon at Tell en-Nasbeh.

But we discovered no decisive evidence that the Pre-Semites of Tell en-Nasbeh ever incinerated their dead. Yet it is pertinent to record the fact that in the center of Cave Tomb 6 was found an intricate mass of human remains in a badly broken and seemingly calcined condition. But there were no remains of charcoal or other signs of fire, and we had to conclude that the disorder and comminution might have been caused by the trampling and delving of Middle Bronze Age looters.

In speaking about his Troglodytes Mr. Macalister remarks,* "Who these people may have been, and what their relation was to other tribes of the Mediterranean basin, are questions that for the present must await further researches in other centres of their occupation." It seems clear that Tell en-Nasbeh was one of their centers of occupation, and the specimens of their pottery taken from the two above-mentioned cave tombs exceed in amount and variety any

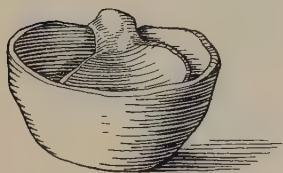
**The Excavation of Gezer*, Vol. I, p. 6.



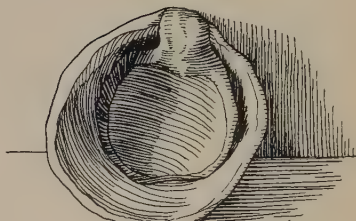
No. 118
View-A



No. 118
View-B



No. 118
View-C



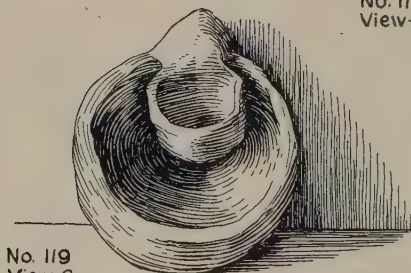
No. 118
View-D



No. 119
View-A



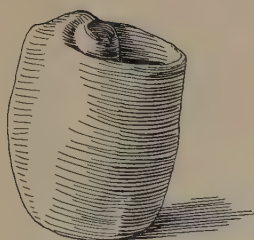
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View-B



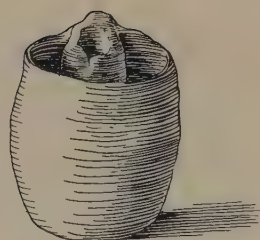
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View-C



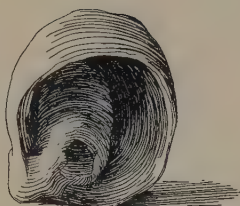
XXI. Double cups from the lower levels of Tombs 5 and 6.



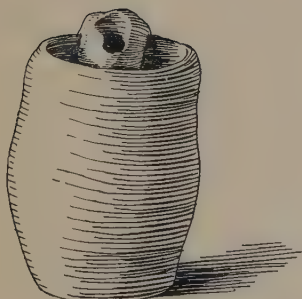
No. 14
View-A



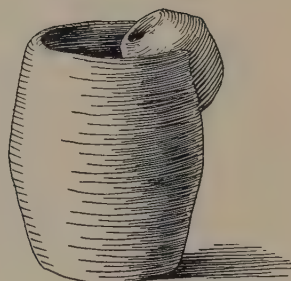
No. 14
View-B



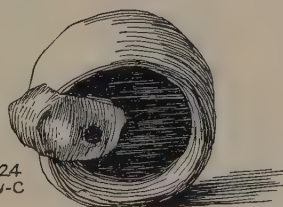
No. 14
View-C



No. 24
View-A



No. 24
View-B



No. 24
View-C



XXII. Double cups, conventionalized, from upper levels of Tombs
5 and 6.

similar deposit hitherto recovered.* Other Pre-Semitic burial caves probably lie hidden along the eastern slope of the Tell, and it is to be hoped that during the 1929 campaign one will be found with all its contents intact. In an earlier section of this report we have mentioned the fact that a trench, sunk through the debris outside of the south-end city wall, yielded ledge-handle potsherds on the surface and Early Iron Age pottery at the bottom, eighteen feet down. Reversal of the ceramic sequence had resulted from the dumping of excavated intramural debris over the city wall. Afterwards, when we of a later day excavated anew the same intramural area, cleared to bedrock by ninth century Israelites, we found remains of two pre-Semitic burial caves which probably had yielded the fragments of the ledge-handle pottery found on top of the ancient dump, whose sloping lines of deposition still were clearly discernible in the trench.

In this preliminary report it will not be possible to present more than a few outstanding examples of Pre-Semitic pottery from Tell en-Nasbeh. There were some fine examples of buff ware painted in red lines, as shown in the case of two globular ledge-handle pots figured on page 44. Occasionally, as in No. 18, the ledge handles tilt from the horizontal in opposite directions. In No. 36 the decorator apparently sought to imitate basketry weaves. There is not the slightest indication that the ancient Pre-Semitic potter knew the wheel or the tournette. All the pottery was modeled by hand, and has the characteristic asymmetries of such work. The painted ware is small in proportion to the unpainted. But there may have been more than is now recognizable. The seepage of water through the caves, the deposition of carbonate of lime, and the surface disintegration of coarse-grained ware may have obliterated some decorations. In view of the soft-baked nature of the ware, water was used sparingly in cleaning, or was wholly omitted, and we had the pleasure of seeing unsuspected decorations appear gradually, while the pots were standing on a shelf in a show-case.

*There are over one hundred and fifty ceramic objects which are either entire or can easily be restored.

A class of pottery objects entirely new to the Pre-Semitic period is figured for the first time in the accompanying illustrations (Pages 46-47). We have a series of cups within cups whose purpose must for the present remain a matter of conjecture. The small inner cup is in each case attached to the rim of the outer, so that it forms an integral part of the whole. Nos. 14¹¹⁸ and 24¹¹⁹ illustrate the form in which they occurred in the lowest level, and are evidently prototypes of the conventionalized later forms, in which a rope of clay, some inches in length, was crudely modeled into the side of the larger cup, leaving a slight ridge. The part projecting above the rim was then bent down into the cup so that it made contact with the proximate portion of the inner cup wall. A hole, which never quite penetrated to the bottom, was then bored into this clay tongue, with a round stick, while the clay was still soft. The result was a conventionalized semblance of one cup fixed within the other. The modelers left their fingerprints on the clay so clearly that their manipulations can be followed after a lapse of something like five thousand years.

It is not conceivable that such double cups, even of the earlier form, could ever have served a useful purpose in practical life. This remains true, even though the present specimens are regarded as miniature replicas made for funerary purposes. In short, these strange double cups must have served some ritual purpose in connection with the dead, and in that case are of religious significance. This conclusion is forced upon me after careful consideration of a number of other possibilities, as that it is the primitive counterpart of the modern pail-and-dipper, or a primitive lamp, or a vase to prolong the freshness of a flower offering. This last suggestion, attractive and ingenious, was made by Pere H. Vincent when we had only the upper level forms to judge by. As soon as the clearly cuplike specimens from the lower levels appeared, he withdrew the suggestion as inapplicable.

Pending further discoveries I venture the suggestion that these cups were used for libation purposes—for the pouring



XXIII. Pal. Inst. Photo. No. 321. Series of double cups showing gradual conventionalization.

of two liquids simultaneously, such as oil and wine.* That these indigines should have been sufficiently advanced to cultivate the olive and the vine need not occasion surprise. Several times I observed in the debris from the tombs what seemed to be remains of carbonized olive pits. Impressions of textiles on potsherds, the possession of gold ornaments and carnelian beads, and the artistry shown in their pottery, incline me to think that they had risen culturally above the level of people whom we ordinarily describe as troglodytes.

On account of the long continued use of these tombs, it is a question whether all their contents can be referred to one period. Pere H. Vincent, who published in "Jerusalem Sous Terre" (1911) some pieces of similarly decorated pottery found on Mount Ophel, gave it as his opinion that the tomb groups on the whole belong to the Aeneolithic Age, 3000-2500 B. C. However, the forms and craftsmanship of pots and bowls found in the lowest levels of the tombs point to a period still more remote, and may have to be regarded as of neolithic type. If the double cups described and figured above are hereafter found in other tombs of this early period, they will serve to identify their makers with the Pre-Semitic racial stock of Tell en-Nasbeh.

It should be added that two fairly well preserved crania were encased in paraffine and sent to Berkeley. On account of the present lack of adequate laboratory facilities they have not yet been unpacked, cleaned, and subjected to the Ambroid hardening process. As soon as this is done they will be submitted to expert anthropological examination. It is hoped, also, that another season of excavation may increase the material for determining the affinities of these Pre-Semites among the Mediterranean races.

The North End of the Tell

Toward the end of the season of 1927 I moved a part of the gang to a point near the north end of the Tell. The object was to obtain, if possible, a better reading of the various oc-

*In I Samuel VII:6 is a reference to a water libation "poured out before Yahweh" at Mizpah in the days of Samuel.

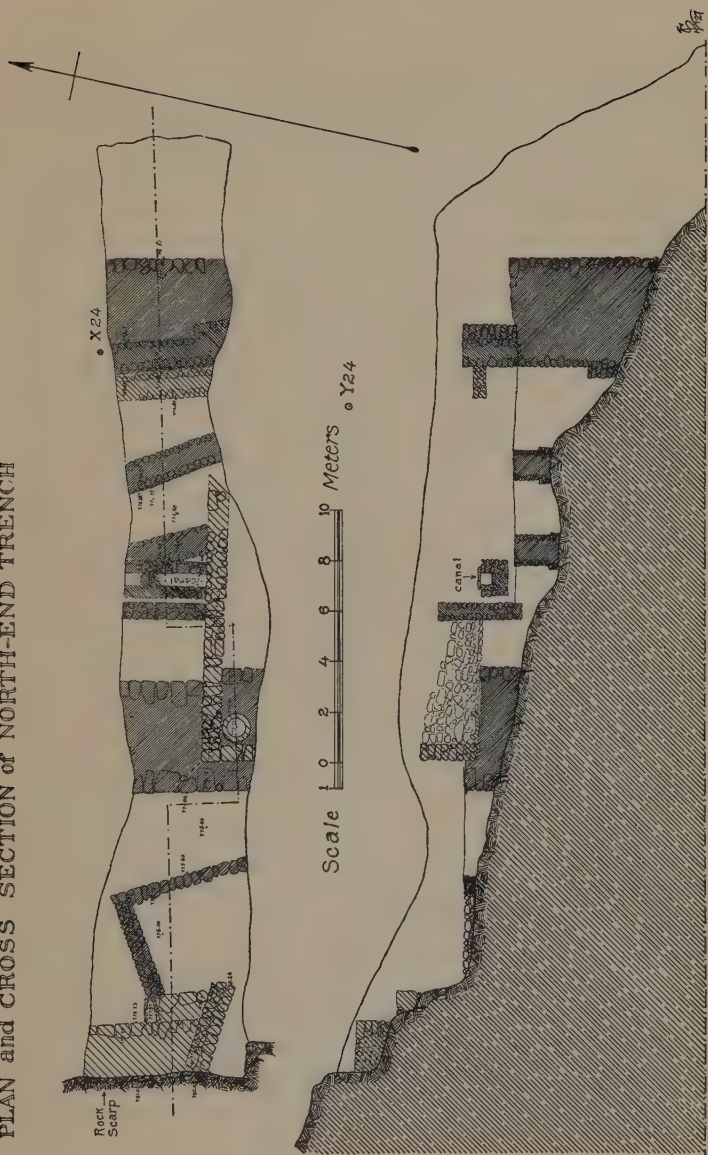
cupation levels of the city than was possible at the south end, where the central area of the city had been denuded to the rock outcrop and only the Israelite level had been preserved with any completeness along the walls. Instead of digging a narrow trench, which rarely reveals much, we cut a very wide one and mapped all the structures so that they could later be incorporated in a systematic map.

The results proved to be extremely interesting, but only the outstanding features can be mentioned in this report. More detailed discussion will be reserved until after the projected campaign of 1929. The great wall was found again on the eastern edge of the Tell, but its top was buried under eight feet of debris, and the height of the wall still standing was about twenty feet. The total depth of deposits near the wall, therefore, was nearly thirty feet. The surface level here and there contained Roman pottery, including Roman lamps. Signs of Roman occupation were specially abundant around the remains of a square tower planted on a commanding outcrop of rock. It seems clear that a Roman guard was stationed on the north end of the Tell during the final stages of its occupation.

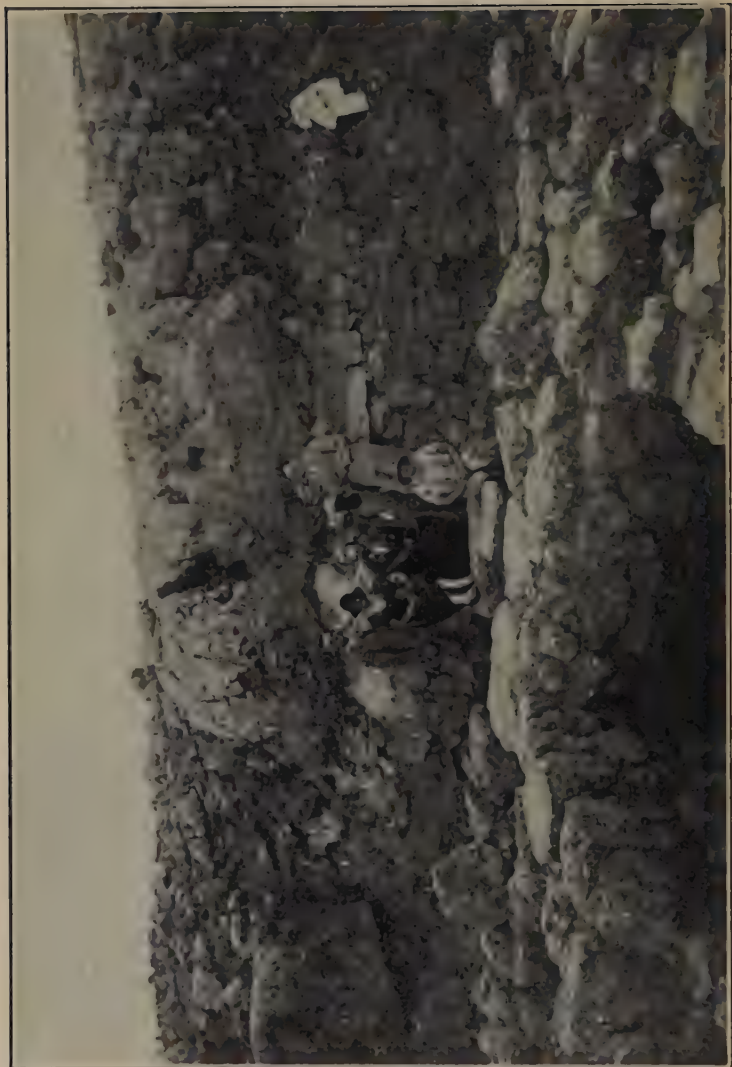
The most clearly marked levels beneath the Roman were late and early Iron Age, Middle Bronze and Early Bronze Ages. Near the above-mentioned tower, last occupied by Romans, but probably of Israelite origin, was found a well preserved winepress hewn in bedrock. The trodden-out grape juice drained to the lower end of the square stone basin and ran through a V-shaped opening into a stone vat, also graven in bedrock. The juxtaposition of tower and winepress strikingly illustrates the opening lines of Isaiah's "Song of the Vineyard", "a tower (*migdal*) he built in the midst, and hewed also therein a wine-vat (*yeḡebh*)", Is. 5: 2.

About thirty yards farther south, at the base of a low cliff facing eastward, our workmen uncovered, on June 28, 1927, a tunnel-like passage leading into the mountain. When cleared of debris a flight of fourteen stone steps was found, descending into a large grotto. Several feet of rock, which originally formed a part of the ceiling, had scaled off and

PLAN and CROSS SECTION of NORTH-END TRENCH



XXIV. Structures and levels in Northend Trench.



XNV. Pal. Inst. Photo. No. 311. The Governor's party at entrance to wine-storage grotto
No. 168. Governor Keith-Roach is holding a ring-burnished bowl.
The man in the center is in the entrance to the grotto.

fallen down as the result of seepage or earthquakes, and two diverging passages, reaching back into the mountain, could be seen over the fallen rock masses. When this debris had been removed we began to find abundant fragments of what evidently were wine jars. The grotto promised to be so important that I sent an invitation to Major Gordon Keith-Roach, Governor of Jerusalem, to come and assist us in making a special event of the formal opening of this old wine storage grotto. This he obligingly did, and the accompanying photograph shows the Governor's party at the entrance of the grotto.

The excavation of the interior had to be carried on with great caution on account of the insecurity of the rock ceiling. It was too late in the season to provide mechanical means of overcoming the danger of falling rocks, so the entrance was walled up. This was fortunate, for soon afterward, July 11, occurred the destructive earthquake of 1927, which probably precipitated another shower of loose rocks from the ceiling.

Meanwhile the grotto had yielded one of the most significant discoveries of the season—a jar-handle seal whose inscription, in old Hebrew, or perhaps Aramaic, characters, seemed to me clearly to read MZP. This reading has since then been confirmed by a number of Semitic epigraphists, among them Charles C. Torrey of Yale, Professor R. Butin of the Catholic University of America, and Professor Mark Lidzbarski of Goettingen. Professor Torrey wrote me under date of March 19, 1928, that my letter with enclosures of a photograph and drawing of the jar-handle seal had been received just as he was starting out to keep an appointment. The photograph fell out, and after glancing at it he wrote immediately as follows: "I have not yet looked at your drawing nor read any part of your letter; I do not know how you, or anyone else, may have read the inscription on this jar-handle. The photograph, however, is perfectly plain, and there could not be the slightest doubt (I think) as to the correct reading of these three characters. They are Mem Tsade Pe." (Dr. Torrey



XXVI. Pal. Inst. Photos. Nos. A500a and A500b. Two views of MZP jar handle seal found in storage grotto No. 168.

wrote the letters in Hebrew, their English equivalent being MZP.)

Since these are precisely the characters which would have been used to write the name "Mizpah" or "Mizpeh" the argument for the identification of Tell en-Nasbeh with Mizpah of Benjamin receives additional support from this find. The ceramic context in which the jar-handle seal was found points to the sixth or seventh century B. C. Professor Butin calls attention to the fact that the letters, particularly the Mem, have a cursive aspect, indicating the influence of papyrus writing. The left downstroke of the Pe ends in a peculiar fork which is shown emphasized by a side light in the right hand photograph, whereas the other gives its normal appearance under a direct light. There is so much difference in form and thickness between the inner and outer strokes of the fork that there is ground for regarding the outer one as unintentional. It scarcely is necessary to point out that the finding of this seal within a grotto minimizes the likelihood that it was brought there from elsewhere.

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